

September

September Events

- 4th 5:30pm SPRC Meeting
- 8th 8:30am UMW Breakfast
- 10th 5:30pm Nominations Committee
- 14th 9:00am Church Workday
- 15th 12:15pm Church Council
- 18th 6:30pm Worship on Wednesday
- 22nd 8:00am UMM Breakfast
- 29th 12:15pm 5th Sunday Dinner

Weekly Events

Sundays:

- River of Life 8:30 AM
- Sunday School 9:45 AM
- Worship Service 10:55 AM
- Stone Soup 5:00 PM

Wednesdays:

- Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM

Church Office Hours

Monday – Friday
9 AM – 12 NOON

Birthdays:

- 1st Norma McKinney
- 4th Jean Moore
- 5th Ginger Myers
- 8th Nancy Jones
David Outlaw
- 10th Jim Maness
- 11th Holli McKinney
- 15th Caitlin Gentry
- 16th Vicki Lindsay
Seth Smith
- 18th Lorene Bickerstaff
- 19th Artie Olaisen
- 20th Lauren Arsuffi
- 24th Marley
Cunningham

Anniversaries:

- 3rd Russell & Pam
Burns
- 4th Dave & Doreen
Gingrich
- 5th Craig & Catherine
Cuthbertson
- 16th Grant & Jenny
Outlaw
- 17th Tom & Rose Marie
Haigler

THE UPPER ROOM

DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Thoughts about Prayer:

Who's waiting for an invitation to pray with me? – Sep 1

Today I will trust in the power of prayer. – Sep 23

Don't forget to pick-up your free copy of The Upper Room in the narthex or back hall.

Web Site: www.brysoncityumc.org

E-Mail: office@brysoncityumc.org

Fax: (828) 488-9062

Phone: (828) 488-2680

Bryson City, NC 28713

76 Main Street

PO Box 817

Bryson City United Methodist Church

September 2013



Newsletter



The Flowers of 2013
[Watch a Video](#) on YouTube to see more flowers that kept our church looking beautiful this summer.

Want more photos? [See More](#) on our website.



Memo from the Midbar

מִדְבָּר



Surprised by Joy

Sometimes we aren't seeking God but he speaks to us in the midst of our own chaos and doubt. This may happen in little moments of everyday life but it often happens at times and in ways that we don't expect. When this happens, we find that a new sacred space has been created.

One of the most unlikely heroes in the Bible would have to be Jacob. From his birth he manipulated, lied and took as much for himself as possible. It didn't seem to matter if the one he was dealing with was a stranger or his own family.

After a final deception of his father Isaac, Jacob goes to find a wife from his mother's tribe in another country. It is likely that on this trip he spent much of his time looking over his shoulder

for his brother Esau who might be hot-on-his-heels as he sought revenge for Jacob's most recent trickery and his brother's loss of his birthright.

On the way to a foreign land, Jacob stops to spend a fitful night using a rock as a pillow. As he begins to dream, he sees angels going up and down a "ladder" from the place where he rests to heaven. God speaks to him promising provision and the land (the Promised Land) to Jacob and his descendants. Then...

When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it." He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven."

Genesis 28:16-17 NIV

The dream made such an impact on Jacob that he raised the "pillow stone" as a monument to God and vowed to return and make a place of worship to God in that place. The last place that Jacob had intended to meet God and find a sacred space would be anointed as Bethel, the house of God.

Has God shown up in ways that made you stop, recognize God's saving power? Did God provide for you in a way that caused you to think, "Surely the Lord is in this place"?

In his autobiographical book C. S. Lewis speaks of a similar experience. He had abandoned his childhood faith and replaced it with intellectualism. Lewis became convinced that the latest scholarship and intellectualism had replaced any notion of faith in a God that seemed to be centuries old.

But rather than showing up in a dream, God showed up in Lewis' friends. Ultimately he recognized and let go of the "chronological snobbery" - the latest intellectual notion trumps all other truths - which he had been holding onto. Lewis recognized that joy,

true unadulterated joy, came through a relationship with God.

It was so surprising and overwhelming to him that he became one of the most prominent and recognized Christian writers and theologians of the 20th century. And the name of his autobiography: *Surprised by Joy*.

Have you had a similar experience? Has God's love and joy shown up through a friend?

In my own experience, God surprised me by showing up when I was deathly sick from a gangrenous appendix. After going through several surgeries and medications, my health continued its downward spiral. Finally, after the doctors repaired a collapsed lung and seemed to have finally found the source of the ongoing physical problem, my health began to improve.

Yet, I didn't have the hope and joy of someone filled with God's Spirit. I had drifted away from God and the church. Life was good but I didn't feel complete. Then a good friend who had been a lifelong mentor showed up unexpectedly in my hospital room. That was

the day that I was surprised by God's joy. It was the day that healing truly began in my life physically, psychologically and spiritually.

God longs to surprise us with joy in big and little ways. As we are drawn into a relationship with

the living Christ, we find that healing happens in the midst of daily chaos.

It is my prayer that God would surprise you with joy in unexpected ways. That you might feel his healing, provision and hope in your life today.



Prayer Chain

There are times when each of us is desperately in need of prayer and God's healing of our body, mind and spirit.

There is great power in prayer. Whether it is through personal prayer or "intercessory prayer" for others.

The prayer of faith will save the sick.

James 5:15a NRS

You are probably aware of the intercessory prayer offered each week during

our worship service. But did you know that our church has a team of dedicated pray-ers? We call this support team our Prayer Chain.

Our church is in the process of updating our Prayer Chain so that we can most effectively pray for the needs of our church and community.

If you would like to be a part of this powerful ministry, please contact:

Betty Sandlin
488-3871

Dolores Price
488-3438

Church News

Church Council

The next church council meeting will be on Sunday, September 15 after the service.

We will be discussing old and new business including hearing more details about the new contemporary worship service. Everyone in our congregation is welcome to attend this meeting.

Worship Committee

If you would be interested in being a liturgist, please contact Arthur Tribble at: 488-0372 home 770-354-2941 cell Training will be provided.

Finance Committee

The finance committee will not be meeting this month.

UM Men

The next UMM breakfast will be Sunday, September 22 at 8am in the Fellowship Hall.

Join us for a time of sharing, devotional, fellowship and of course a hearty breakfast!

UM Women

The UMW will be meeting on Sunday, September 8 at 8:30am in the Fellowship Hall.

Church Workday

There will be a church workday on Saturday, September 14 starting at 9am. Part of the work we will be doing is spreading mulch, so please bring wheelbarrows, rakes and gloves.

Church Directory Photos

PLEASE: Don't forget to submit your picture or have Mikki or Pat take one for our church directory.

A Note from Wilma

For the many cards, lunches, gifts, hugs, & well wishes from my Bryson City UMC family, I send my heartfelt thanks and God's Blessings on each of you. I am still in the afterglow of such a wonderful & satisfying send off and closure to this portion of God's plan for my life. What an amazing God we serve!

I have an extra bedroom and a welcome just waiting for you to come for a visit at 14901 North Pennsylvania Avenue, #7A, Oklahoma City, OK 73134

Wilma Reppert
828-421-9391
wreppert@gmail.com



Water Filter Update

Thanks to everyone's generous support, we have raised the full amount for the portable water filtration system!

Our goal for September is to raise enough money to build another well. If you would like to contribute to this ministry of Bryson City UMC, feel free to write a check or make a cash donation and mark River of Life on the check or envelope.

If you are interested in learning more about how Bryson City UMC through the River of Life is ministering to the people of Haiti, contact Pastor Wayner at the church office or

[See More online.](#)

Small Group Bible Study

We are in the process of planning new Bible Study groups and are interested to hear how you need to grow spiritually.

We hope to be able to start new study groups within the next month.

Please fill out the "[Small Group Survey](#)" and email it back or print a copy and drop it by the office.



Stone Soup Update

Join us each Sunday, starting at 5 pm for a fellowship meal and study of the Psalms.

We begin our time together with a "fellowship dinner" that has a theme each week such as "Mexican" or "Picnic."

After sharing in a meal together we share in reflecting on a Psalm passage. Most often these passages offer us the opportunity for reflection and discussion of the deeper meaning of the message on Sunday morning.

Check the website or church bulletin to see what the food "theme" and the Psalm in focus will be for each week.

Together we are being fed physically and spiritually.



Back to School

In August, we asked our congregation to bring various school supplies for children in our community that couldn't afford them.

Wow! You responded in a big way!

There were more notebooks and pencils, glue sticks and crayons dictionaries and thesauruses than ever before! And there was so much more!

We and the children are grateful for your gifts that gave them "a level playing field" so they could be successful in their studies.

Thanks to all who showed the love of Christ through

your record breaking gifts this school year.

Dulcimer Concert

Neal Hellman, nationally acclaimed performer and teacher of the mountain dulcimer, will be presenting a concert on Tuesday, September 10 at 4pm in the Fellowship Hall. This concert is free, but donations are appreciated. Please contact Ann Carvalho for more information.

5th Sunday

Don't forget about the 5th Sunday Dinner on Sunday, September 29 after the worship service. Bring along a favorite dish to share and join us in the Fellowship Hall.

We will also be doing a hymn singing during the service, so look for the bulletin insert to let us know your favorite hymns.

We are a fellowship of believers whose goal is to worship and demonstrate the Love of God by serving the needs of the community and the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

Contemporary Worship Service Update



Our First WoW

On August 14th we hosted the first of our new Worship on Wednesday services (WoW!). There were 20 people attending the service including some from the River of Life services and Bryson City UMC, plus a few new faces.

After a welcome and prayer by Pastor Wayner, everyone enjoyed singing three joyful songs that were new to some and favorites for others. Carole Maennle led off with *How Great is our God*, followed by Dwayne Parton leading *Better is One Day (In Your Courts)* and *Your Love Never Fails*.

Then the group shared their God Sitings of how they have seen the Lord at

work in the world around and through them. Next was time for prayer requests and a time for intercessory prayer.

The message of the evening titled *How Far Would You Go?* was from John 3:16-17. Pastor Wayner explored how far God was willing to go to share his grace and love with each of us. The question that followed was, "how far are you willing to go to share this love and grace with others?"

Immediately following the message, the congregation then broke up into small groups for 10-15 minutes of discussion on the topic. There was certainly some lively discussion and

everyone went away encouraged and challenged.

Worship concluded with another round of *Your Love Never Fails* followed by a benediction and sending out. There was a small collection of offerings taken up after the service.

Kids at WoW

We enjoyed having 5 children attend our service and had set up a children's resource table in the back of the Fellowship Hall. Our plan was to keep the children with us through the entire service if possible.

To that end, there were special tables set up for the children to use to color, draw and love on stuffed animals under parental supervision and guidance. This allowed the parents to stay connected to the entire service including the message and small group discussion. It was a blessing all around.

September 18 WoW!

Join us for the next WoW service at 6:30 pm on September 18th. We plan to have a larger crowd and would love to have people to welcome them to our church family.

Help us spread the word

about the worship service. Is there someone you know that hasn't been coming to our church in a little while? Maybe Wednesday evenings would work better for them.

Maybe there a young family in your neighborhood that would enjoy building some new relationships as they explore and build their faith? Bring them!



Church of Celebration

Imagine sitting in your pew on a typical Sunday morning worship service. You have heard announcements, had the opportunity to sing a song of praise, welcomed each other in Christ's love, and prayed together.

Now it is time to offer our gifts to God as an offering. Have you ever noticed that as the liturgist meets the ushers to take up the offering that he/she removes a little plastic

church from the offering plates and places it on the altar?

Have you sat in your pew and thought that it seemed odd to place the little church on the altar? There must be some reason, some tradition that has caused the church to be placed there week after week. But for the life of you, it just didn't make sense.

Maybe you know the tradition and symbolism of the little church and you are wondering, "Why don't we use the little church like we used to?"

The time has come to share with you more information about the reason for the little church and what each of us can do with it as we worship together in the future.

The tradition of the little white church on the altar is one of celebration. It is an opportunity for us to celebrate special days in our lives. It might be a birthday or anniversary. It might be the celebration of a special day of healing, such as new news or an anniversary of the doctor saying, "You don't have cancer!" There are many days and many reasons for us to celebrate as a body of Christ together.

As an offering for these celebrations, we offer "gifts" back to God for the goodness in our lives. The monetary tribute given for these celebrations will be placed in the Good Samaritan Fund. This community fund designed to give help and hope to others in our community could be what is needed in a time of crisis to offer hope and celebration for what Jesus called "the least of these."

Starting this Sunday, September 1st, there will be a change in the timing of placing the church on the altar. Rather than being placed there only during the offering, it will be there throughout the entire service. This will give you the opportunity to celebrate quietly during the time of greeting, or share your celebration with the whole congregation before the time of greeting.

It's time to count your blessings and celebrate with our whole church so that we might experience God's goodness together. And in the process, offer hope and the potential for celebration to others that desperately need to feel God's presence in their lives.

Celebrate with us!

~The Worship Committee